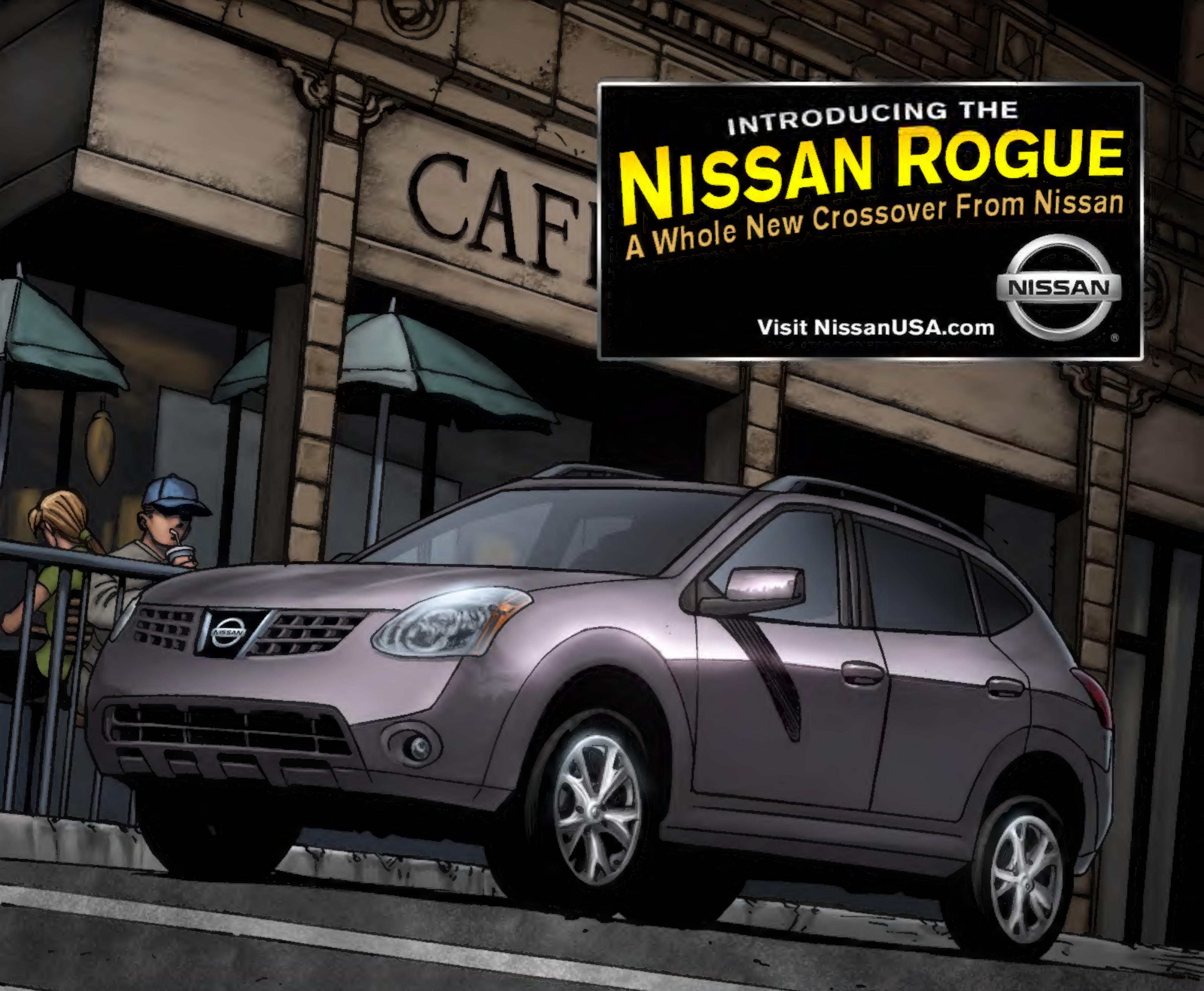


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HEROES



CHAPTER 66

THE TEN BRIDES OF TAKEZO KENSEI

Over four hundred years old, Takezo Kensei
has outlived entire lineages of families.

But what of his own?

Who were the loves of Takezo Kensei?

KINGS AND QUEENS. WISE MEN AND LEADERS. PROPHETS AND WARRIOR. I'VE OUTLIVED THE GREATEST MEN AND WOMEN ON THE PLANET.

EVEN AMONG THOSE WHO COULD BEND STEEL WITH THEIR BARE HANDS. OR WIELD THE VERY ELEMENTS. I SURVIVED THEM ALL.

ALL EXCEPT ONE.



HIRO NAKAMURA.

THIS IS TWICE NOW THAT HE'S KILLED ME.

BUT WHAT DO I HAVE TO SHOW FOR IT?

A FEW DOZEN NAMES?
TAKEZO KENSEI?
RICHARD SANDERS?
ADAM MONROE?

WHAT GOOD IS IMMORTALITY WHEN YOU'RE BURIED ALIVE?

WHEN THE LOVES OF YOUR LIFE ARE ALL DEAD AND GONE?

The TEN BRIDES of TAKEZO KENSEI

CHUCK KIM Writer PETER STEIGERWALD Art & Colors
COMICRAFT Lettering An ASPEN M.L.T. Production





1692, DIEDENSHAUSEN,
GERMANY.

AFTER TURNING 42, I
REALIZED I DID NOT AGE.
AFTER 20 YEARS AS MY
WIFE, HELENE SAW IT TOO.

SHE FLED INTO THE WOODS,
CALLING ME A *DEVIL*. RUMOR
HAS IT SHE DIED YEARS
LATER IN A NUNNERY.

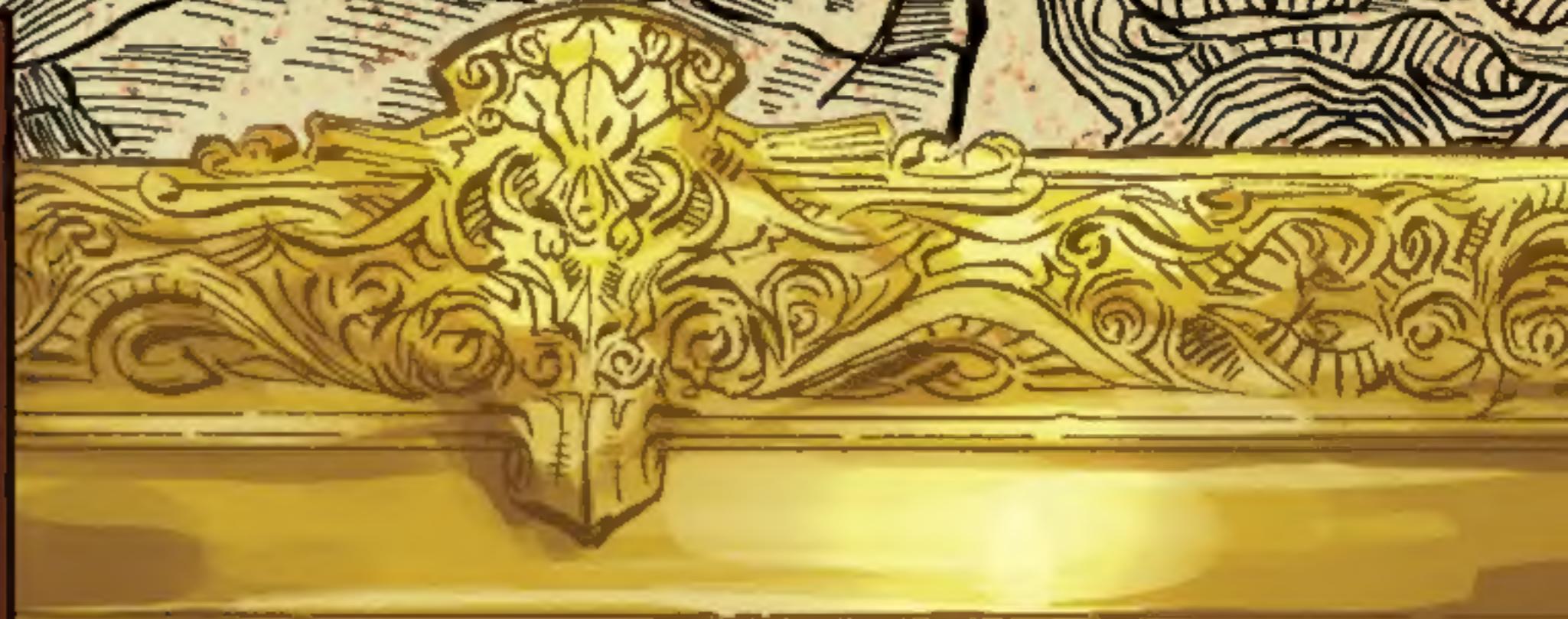


1747, MILAN, ITALY.

MY SECOND WIFE,
MARIA, BORE ME
TWO SONS.

EVEN AFTER A
CENTURY OF LIVING, I
LEARNED SOMETHING
NEW -- I DON'T LIKE
CHILDREN.

I LEFT THEM WITH
TWO SACKS OF COIN
AND LEFT FOR THE
NEW COUNTRY TO
BEGIN AGAIN.



1782, I ABANDONED
THE QUEEN'S FORCES
FOR PARIS, FRANCE.

MY NEXT WIFE I
MET AT A BALL AT
THE VERSAILLES.



PROUD OF HER
LOOKS, I NEVER SAW
FREDERICA OUT OF
HER FACE POWDER
AND ROUGE.

IT WAS THAT LOVE
OF LEAD-BASED
COSMETICS THAT
LED TO HER
INTIMELY END.

1784, JAPAN.

SEARCHING FOR DIRECTION, I RETURNED TO JAPAN TO FIND YAEKO'S DESCENDANTS.

I THOUGHT I COULD FIND FULFILLMENT BY WINNING HER HEART. OR HER GREAT GRANDDAUGHTER'S.

YUMI, WHILE BEAUTIFUL, WAS NOT YAEKO. I GREW BORED AND FADED MY DROWNING WITH A CAREFULLY PLANNED ACCIDENT.

1787 - THE NORTHWEST TERRITORY.

I TOOK A NEW NAME AND A NEW WIFE. OUT OF LOVE, I CONFESSED MY SECRET TO HER, THAT I CANNOT DIE.

ANGELICA AND I WERE TOGETHER FOR 62 YEARS, TELLING PEOPLE I WAS HER HUSBAND. THEN SON. THEN GRANDSON.

WE HELD HANDS AS SHE BREATHED HER LAST BREATH, AT AGE 87.

1864 - I MARRIED MY SECOND MARIA IN ATLANTA, AT THE ONSET OF THE CIVIL WAR, AS FATE WOULD HAVE IT, I CHOSE THE LOSING SIDE. AGAIN.

WHILE I FOUGHT ON THE BATTLEFIELD, SHE DIED IN A PLANTATION FIRE AFTER INHALING TOO MUCH SMOKE.

MONTRÉAL 1901 - I PUT MY FRENCH BACK TO GOOD USE AND MEET A CAPTIVATING BEAUTY: DIANE.

AFTER A HARSH WINTER, SHE'S STRICKEN WITH TUBERCULOSIS. AS A LAST MEASURE, I INJECTED HER WITH A VIAL OF MY BLOOD AS SHE SLEPT.

THE DOCTORS CALLED HER RECOVERY A *MIRACLE*. SHE DIED A HAPPY AND PEACEFUL DEATH, 20 YEARS LATER.

1926, CHICAGO - LOUISA SAW ME REGENERATE MY LEFT EYE AND SPLEEN AFTER A VICIOUS MUGGING.

EVER THE FRAGILE CREATURE, SHE *DRANK* HERSELF TO DEATH FOUR MONTHS LATER.

1958 - LOS ANGELES.

THERESA NEVER LOVED ME. I LEARNED THIS WHEN SHE AND HER LOVER SHOT ME TWICE IN THE CHEST. THEN DUMPED MY BODY OFF A CLIFF.

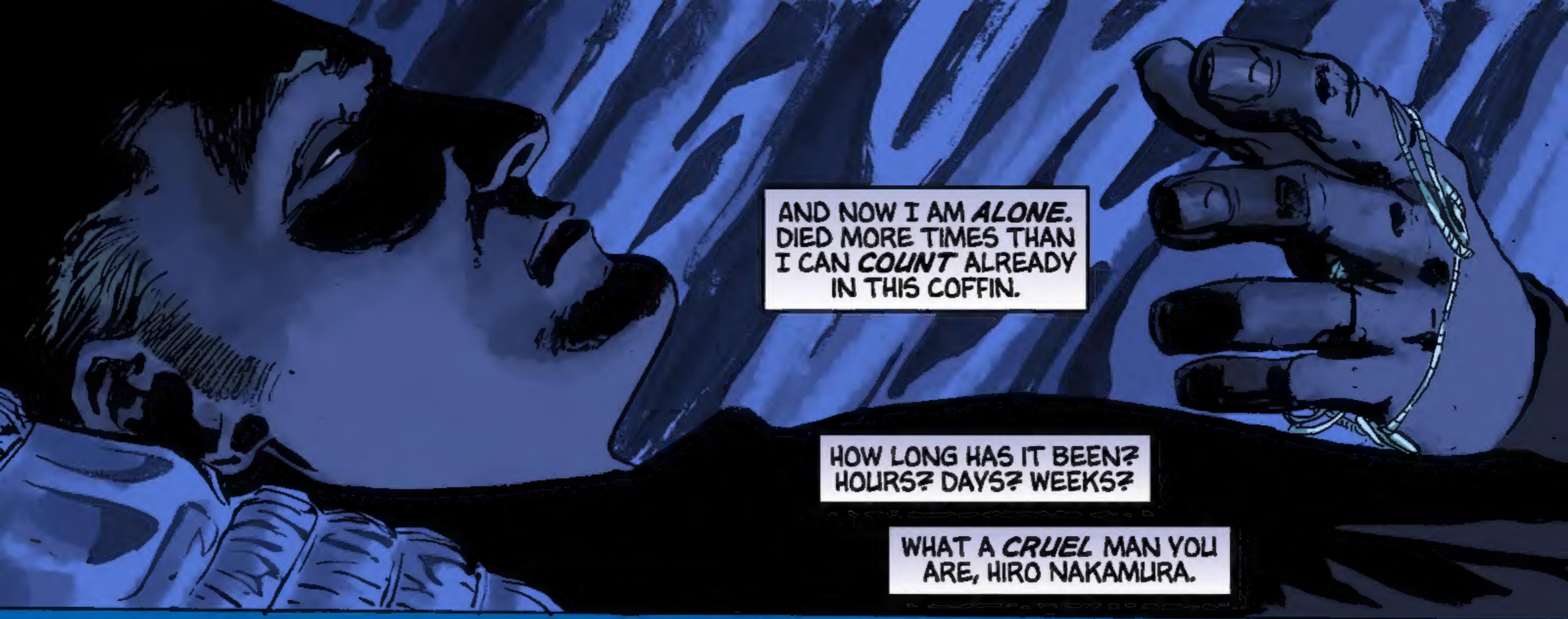
BY MORNING, I SWAM BACK TO SHORE AND KILLED THEM AS THEY SLEPT.

1977 - TRINA.

SHE REMARRIED. HAD CHILDREN. GRANDCHILDREN.

DIED SIX YEARS AGO IN A CAR ACCIDENT.

THANKS TO KAITO AND THE OTHERS, I NEVER GOT THE CHANCE TO SAY GOOD-BYE.



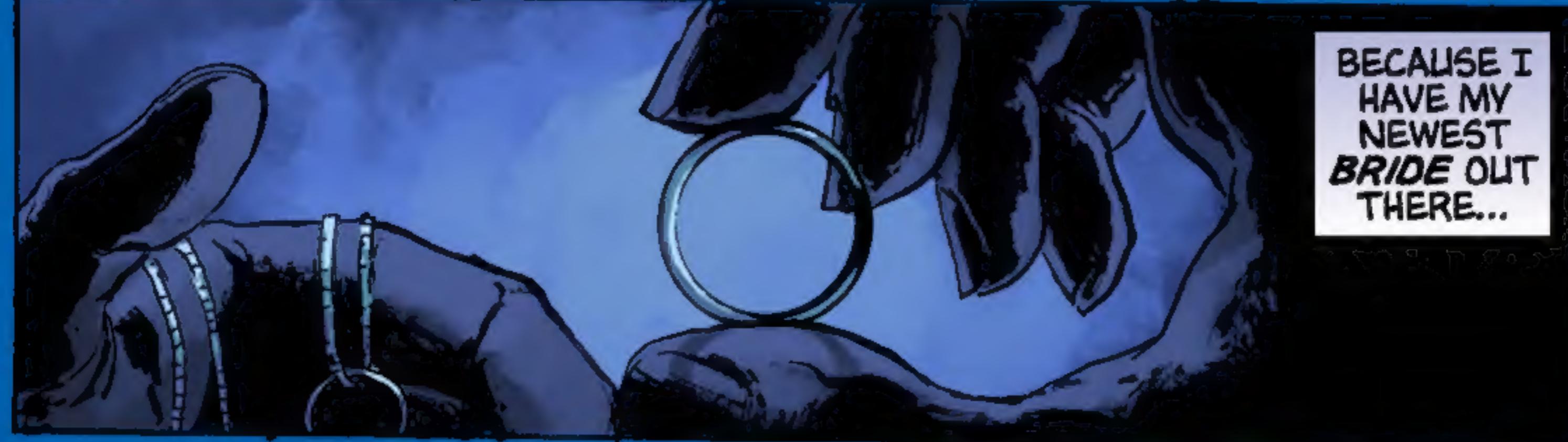
AND NOW I AM ALONE.
DIED MORE TIMES THAN
I CAN COUNT ALREADY
IN THIS COFFIN.

HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN?
HOURS? DAYS? WEEKS?

WHAT A CRUEL MAN YOU
ARE, HIRO NAKAMURA.



BUT THAT SUITS
ME FINE.



BECAUSE I
HAVE MY
NEWEST
BRIDE OUT
THERE...



...AND I'M
CERTAIN SHE'LL
FIND ME.

End